THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No.

(b) to (c) China illegally claims approximately 90,000 square kilometres of Indian territory in the State of Arunachal Pradesh. China did not give a visa to an officer of the Arunachal Pradesh cadre of the Indian Administrative Service to visit China in May, 2007 on a study tour organised by the Department of Personnel and Training. Government of India have conveyed its regret and disappointment to the Chinese side on this occasion through the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi and the Indian Embassy in Beijing. Government have also reiterated their position that Arunachal Pradesh is an integral part of India.

Language for filling passport forms

†1905. PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether passport forms filled in Hindi are accepted by the passport offices under his Ministry;

(b) whether entries are made bilingually (English and Hindi) in the passports; and

(c) if not, by when the aforesaid process would be made in accordance with the official language policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The passport application forms filled bilingually (English and Hindi) are accepted by the passport offices.

(b) At present entries in the passports are made in English, as the passports are prepared as per guidelines of the International Civil Aviation Organization. According to "global inter-operability" of passports, entries in the passport booklets are to be in a language, which facilitates inspection of international travellers at borders. Currently for Machine Readable Travel Documents, it is specified that the entered data in the passport should be in Latin alphabet characters, *i.e.*, A to Z, and Arabic numerals, *i.e.*, 1234567890.

(c) The Ministry is currently trying to streamline the passport issuance system to meet the rapidly growing demand of passports and to issue passports promptly. On implementation of these plans, the Ministry would consider bilingual entries in the passports.

Patents by US patents and trade mark office

1906. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of "Patents" that have been issued by the US Patents and Trademarks Office, in respect of traditional Indian herbal (basic ingredients) of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.